

**WHAT I CLAIM IS:**

1. A fastening apparatus for use with a closure means, including  
  
a latch configured to receive a catch that is attached to a closure means,  
  
characterised in that  
  
the latch includes a lever attached to a release mechanism for the fastening apparatus wherein the lever extends outwards from the closure means when the closure means is held in the open position.
2. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the latch includes a back-plate for fixing the latch to a preferred surface.
3. A fastening apparatus as claimed in either claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the lever is centrally pivoted with respect to the back-plate.
4. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any previous claim wherein the release mechanism includes a notched section of the lever.
5. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 4 wherein the notched section is angled in a substantially perpendicular plane with respect to the back-plate in order to effect the required distance between the surface to which the back-plate is affixed and the closure means – when the catch and the latch are engaged.
6. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 4 wherein the notched section includes at least one notch for engaging with a complementary catch.
7. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any previous claim wherein the latch is released from the catch by the application of pressure to the opposite distal end of the lever with respect to the notched section.

8. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any previous claim wherein the latch includes a cushioning apparatus.
9. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 8 wherein the cushioning apparatus is positioned to extend in a substantially perpendicular plane with respect to the back-plate and to contact the closure means when the closure means is secured by the fastening apparatus.
10. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any of claims 4 to 9 wherein the catch is configured to be able to engage with the notched section on the complimentary latch.
11. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any previous claim wherein the latch is configured such that it can be used with either a left handed or right handed opening closure means.
12. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any previous claim wherein the catch is configured to be substantially U-shaped.
13. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 12 wherein the catch is configured to receive an attachment to secure the catch against the closure means.
14. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 12 wherein the catch includes an attachment apparatus to secure the catch against a closure means.
15. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any of claim 4 to claim 14 wherein the notched section of the lever is located towards the leading distal end of the lever and a handle is located towards the trailing distal end of the lever.
16. A fastening assembly as claimed in claim 16 wherein the notched section is configured to be substantially right-angled to the axis of the lever.
17. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 17 wherein the notched section includes notches on both the upper and lower surfaces of the notched section.

18. A fastening assembly as claimed in any previous claim wherein a biasing means is located substantially centrally to the lever.
19. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 18 wherein the biasing means is a spring.
20. A fastening apparatus as claimed in either claim 18 or claim 19 wherein the biasing means is attached to the lever at the point at which the lever is attached to the back-plate.
21. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 20 wherein one end of the biasing means is attached to the lever whilst the other end of the biasing means is attached to the back-plate.
22. A fastening assembly as claimed in any of claims 18 to claim 21 wherein the biasing means is positioned to effect a pivotal movement on the lever through a substantially vertical plane.
23. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 22 wherein the biasing means ensures that the leading distal edge of the latch is biased downwards from the horizontal when the latch is not engaged with the catch.
24. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any of claim 18 to claim 23 wherein the biasing means exerts a positive pressure in a substantially downward direction onto the catch when the catch is engaged with the latch.
25. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any previous claim wherein the latch includes a restraint device that is configured as a substantially angled portion of the back-plate that limits the upward movement of the trailing distal end of the lever past a pre-defined point.
26. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any of claims 8 to claim 25 wherein the cushioning apparatus is positioned substantially over the point of attachment of the biasing means and the lever to the back-plate.

27. A fastening apparatus as claimed in claim 27 wherein the cushioning apparatus is constructed of a material that exhibits elastic deformation under the application of direct pressure.
28. A fastening apparatus as claimed in either of claims 26 or 27 wherein the cushioning apparatus operates as a positive stop against the closure means.
29. A fastening apparatus as claimed in either of claims 26 or 27 wherein the cushioning apparatus operates as a movement damping device against the closure means.
30. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any of claims 15 to claim 29 wherein the handle of the lever is configured to have a partially textured surface.
31. A fastening apparatus as claimed in any of claims 15 to 29 wherein the handle of the lever includes a substantially rubber-like area.
32. A fastening apparatus substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated by the accompanying drawings.